

REMARKS

I. Introduction

With the cancellation herein without prejudice of claims 1 to 15, 18, and 25 to 33, claims 16, 17, and 19 to 24 are pending in the present application. In view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all of the presently pending claims are allowable, and reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Applicant notes with appreciation the acknowledgment of the claim to foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) and the indication of sufficiency of the declaration under 37 C.F.R. 1.132, filed on January 22, 2007.

II. Rejection of Claims 1, 11 to 15, and 18 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1, 11 to 15, and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over the combination of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0133191 ("Morita et al.") and Japanese Patent Publication No. 06-230738A ("Nakazawa et al."). In this regard, claims 1, 11 to 15, and 18 have been canceled herein without prejudice, thereby rendering the present rejection moot with regard to claims 1, 11 to 15, and 18. As such, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

III. Rejection of Claims 1 and 11 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over the combination of U.S. Patent No. 6,095,652 ("Trayner et al.") and Nakazawa et al. In this regard, claims 1 and 11 have been canceled herein without prejudice, thereby rendering the present rejection moot with regard to claims 1 and 11. As such, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

IV. Allowable Subject Matter

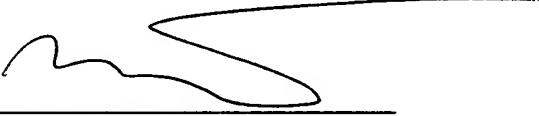
Applicants note with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter contained in claims 16, 17, and 19 to 24. In this regard, the Examiner will note that each of claims 16, 17, 19, and 21 to 24, from which claim 20 depends, has been rewritten herein in independent form to include all of the limitations of its respective base claim. It is therefore respectfully submitted that claims 16, 17, and 19 to 24 are in condition for immediate allowance.

V. Conclusion

It is therefore respectfully submitted that all of the presently pending claims are allowable. All issues raised by the Examiner having been addressed, an early and favorable action on the merits is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: June 19, 2007

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